

REPORT

OF THE

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

In answer to a resolution of the Senate relative to the custom-house at New Orleans.

MAY 31, 1860.—Read, referred to the Committee on Finance, and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *May 30, 1860.*

SIR: In reply to Senate resolution of May 28, 1860, "directing the Secretary of the Treasury to report to the Senate the present state and condition of the new custom-house at New Orleans, and whether, as his opinion, true economy does not require that further appropriations be now made for its completion." I have the honor to transmit herewith a report from the acting engineer in charge of the office of construction under the Treasury Department, relative to the state and condition of the work in question.

In relation to the latter clause of the resolution, the Senate is respectfully referred to the last annual Report on the Finances, page 11, as embracing the views of the department as to the policy of continuing the work on the New Orleans custom-house.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HOWELL COBB,
Secretary of the Treasury.

HON. JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE,
President United States Senate.

[Official.]

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF CONSTRUCTION,
Washington, D. C., May 29, 1860.

SIR: In reply to so much of the Senate resolution of the 28th instant as requires you to "report to the Senate the present state and condition of the new custom-house at New Orleans," I have the honor to say that, as nearly as can be gathered from the local superintendents' reports, (which are confined mainly to details,) the exterior walls of the building are up, or nearly up to the entablature. This entablature is about thirteen (13) feet in height, and when it is finished, the exterior walls will be ready for the roof.

The interior walls, partitions, and floors appear to be completed to the fourth story, and so well advanced that the interior work can be got ready for the roof as early as the exterior, when the means therefor are in hand.

The finishing of the rooms is but partially progressed. A sufficient number have been completed to enable the collector to occupy a portion with his force, although the rooms designed for him are not yet made ready for use.

The finish of the post office and court-house portions is barely commenced. The Postmaster General has reported to this department that it will be a matter of necessity that the rooms designed for a post office shall be ready by the 1st of November, when the lease of the present building will expire (which cannot be renewed.)

This it will be impossible to do with the available balance of the appropriation, and continue the necessary concurrent work.

The entire structure must, of course, be more or less exposed until a roof is on, and this roof cannot be purchased with the present means, nor can it be put in place until the exterior walls are completed, for which there is now no appropriation.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

S. M. CLARK,

Acting Engineer in Charge Treasury Department.

Hon. HOWELL COBB,

Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.